

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1.(Currently Amended)      Apparatus for the automated processing of meat, comprising a transport element for transporting the meat, a cutting element for cutting and/or trimming the meat, a counter-surface for the cutting element and at least one control and/or regulating apparatus, which is in functional connection with the cutting element, characterized in that arranged in the area of the cutting element is a threading element, which is bent in respect of the counter-surface in ~~at~~ the transport plane  $E_1$  of the meat.

2.( Previously Presented)      Apparatus according to claim 1, characterised in that the threading element is an integral component of the counter-surface.

3.( Previously Presented)      Apparatus according to claim 1, characterized in that the threading element is constructed as an extension of the counter-surface.

4.( Previously Presented)      Apparatus according to claim 1, characterized in that the threading element is a spatula-like plate element and has an elongated shape, rounded at the free end.

5.( Previously Presented)      Apparatus according to claim 4, characterised in that the plate element is chamfered at least on the side of facing the meat.

6.( Previously Presented)      Apparatus according to claim 1, characterized in that a unit consisting of counter-surface and the threading element is constructed as swivellable.

7.( Previously Presented)      Apparatus according to 6, characterised in that a unit consisting of counter-surface and threading element is swivellable about at least one rotational axis.

8.( Previously Presented)      Apparatus according to claim 6, characterised in that the unit consisting of counter-surface (13) and threading element (14) is movable in a linear direction.

9.( Previously Presented)      Apparatus according to claim 8, characterised in that a deflector element (30) is arranged on the side of the counter-surface opposite the threading element.

10.( Previously Presented)      Method for the automated processing of meat, comprising the steps:

- transporting the meat into the area of a cutting element,

- running the meat up against a counter-surface before the meat reaches the cutting element,
- cutting and/or trimming the meat by means of the cutting element and
- removing the meat,

characterized in that the meat is threaded by a threading element before running up against the counter-surface, wherein the meat is at least partially lifted from the side and then guided on to the counter-surface.

11. – 12. (Canceled)